

Message Text

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COMMERCE FOR BEWT/RICE

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SUBJ: OPENING EVENT MOSCOW COMMERCIAL OFFICE

REF: STATE 90490

1. REFTEL CALLS ATTENTION TO PROBLEM WHICH EMBASSY ANTICIPATED WOULD ARISE IN CONNECTION WITH EVENTS IN NEW COMMERCIAL OFFICE, NAMELY, NEED FOR SOVIET "SPONSORSHIP" OF EVENT IN QUESTION. PROBLEM CAN BE POSED IN TWO ASPECTS: 1) VISAS FOR COMPANY REPS COMING TO MOSCOW FOR EVENTS IN NEW OFFICE, AS HAS HAPPENED IN CASE OF CAPITAL CONTROLS; AND 2) MORE IMPORTANTLY, IDENTIFYING SOVIET SPECIALISTS WHO SHOULD BE INVITED TO SPECIFIC EVENT AND SECURING THEIR ATTENDANCE.

2. TURNING FIRST TO VISA PROBLEM, TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS NO FIRM SOVIET REQUIREMENT THAT BUSINESSMEN WISHING VISIT MOSCOW BE "SPONSORED" BY SOVIET ORGANIZATION. POLICY IN SUCH CASES SEEMS TO DEPEND UPON MANNER IN WHICH LOCAL SOVIET EMBASSIES AND INTOURIST REPRESENTATIVES INTERPRET REGULATIONS. IN CASE OF OPENING EVENT (INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION QUALITY CONTROLS, JULY 8-12) IN NEW COMMERCIAL OFFICE, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DEPARTMENT OF STATE DISCUSS MATTER WITH SOVIET EMBASSY AND SEEK TO OBTAIN SOVIET EMBASSY'S AGREEMENT THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF US COMPANIES APPLYING FOR SOVIET VISAS IN CONNECTION WITH OPENING EVENT WILL BE GIVEN VISAS. COMMERCE COULD THEN PROVIDE

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COMPANIES WITH LETTER SETTING OUT THIS UNDERSTANDING WHICH

COMPANIES COULD USE WITH INTOURIST REPRESENTATIVES. ADDITIONAL PROBLEM MAY ARISE IN CASE OF FIRMS SUCH AS HEWLETT-PACKARD, VARIAN AND POSSIBLY OTHERS WHOSE REPRESENTATIVES WILL APPLY FOR SOVIET VISAS IN WESTERN EUROPE, BUT THESE WILL HAVE TO BE HANDLED ON AD HOC BASIS.

3. EMBASSY ALSO FORESEES PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING NECESSARY SUPPORT PERSONNEL (INTERPRETERS, BOOTH ATTENDANTS ETC.) FOR EVENTS IN NEW OFFICE WHICH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NORMALLY PROVIDES IN CASE OF EXHIBITIONS SPONSORED BY CHAMBER. WE HAVE WRITTEN TO CHAMBER OUTLINING OUR NEEDS FOR OPENING EVENT, BUT CHAMBER MAY BE RELUCTANT TO COMPLY. IN CASE OF PERSONNEL FOR STAFFS OF "STANKI" AND "HEALTH" EXHIBITIONS, CHAMBER MAINTAINED THAT COMMERCIAL OFFICE PREMISES WERE PART OF EMBASSY AND THAT SOVIET EMPLOYEES ENGAGED THROUGH THE CHAMBER WERE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK THERE. SHOULD CHAMBER FOLLOW SAME POLICY IN CASE OF EVENTS IN NEW OFFICE, WE WOULD BE FORCED TO RELY ON UPDK FOR SUPPORT STAFF, AND UPDK KNOWN TO BE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT SHORT-TERM EMPLOYMENT.

4. EMBASSY INTENDS SEEK ASSISTANCE OF STATE COMMITTEE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN IDENTIFYING AND SECURING ATTENDANCE OF APPROPRIATE SOVIET SPECIALISTS FOR OPENING EVENT. HOWEVER, ABSENCE OF OFFICIAL SOVIET "SPONSOR" MAY BE A PROBLEM HERE AS WELL.

5. IF, AS EMBASSY HOPES WILL NOT BE THE CASE, WE RUN INTO SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN ANY OR ALL OF THREE AREAS MENTIONED ABOVE, WE BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE SUBJECT TO BE RAISED AT UPCOMING MEETING OF US-SOVIET JOINT COMMERCIAL COMMISSION, GIVEN FACT THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW OFFICE WAS SUBJECT OF INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT. EMBASSY SHOULD HAVE CLEARER PICTURE OF HOW SOVIETS WILL RESPOND TO OUR VARIOUS REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE WITH OPENING EVENT PRIOR TO MEETING OF JOINT COMMISSION.
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